



National Association of Federal Retirees Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

WINNIPEG & DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER – November 2020

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES (NAFR)

WINNIPEG AND DISTRICT BRANCH

President's message

I sincerely hope that this newsletter finds you all safe, healthy and happy. What a year 2020 has been. I was hoping that 2020 would be the year that I could enjoy many of the offerings of our Preferred Partners including extended travel insurance through Johnson Insurance, trips through Collette Travel, car rentals and many other exciting things. Alas, that was not meant to be. Instead, like many of you, I cut short my vacation in March and headed home to isolate. I was fortunate that I was vacationing in Canada and didn't have the confusion and complication of trying to secure international flights. Thankfully we have an excellent partner in Johnson Insurance and, from what I am hearing, most if not all claims for trip interruption or cancellation have been settled. We are very fortunate from that perspective.

Following the advice of health officials and the NAFR National Office, all in person meetings were cancelled this year including our Annual General Meeting that was scheduled for April and the two General Meetings that were scheduled for September and November. Not being able to connect with you, our members, has left me feeling very disconnected and isolated. Not a feeling that I like!!! I really hope that we are again able to meet in person through the General Meetings and through the Speaker Series in 2021 but at this point, I am at best, cautiously optimistic. As always, the safety and health of our members will determine when it is safe to again meet in person.

Please make sure we have your email address on file. If you are getting this newsletter by regular mail, it means that we don't have your email address. To update it please contact the branch office by email at nafrwpg@mymts.net or by phone (204) 989-2061. Meeting announcements and reminders including Speaker Series are distributed electronically so it is a much easier way for you to stay informed.

Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day was very different for all of us this year. Unfortunately, we were not able to lay our wreath at the ANAVETs ceremony as it was cancelled. We are always aware of the sacrifice made by our men and women in the Armed Forces and the supreme sacrifice that some made to ensure our safety and freedom. We will never forget.

Branch Board of Directors

There are a few changes to the Board of Directors that I wanted to highlight for you.

Nicky Compton stepped down at the end of her term in April 2020. Barb Higham has changed roles from Director at Large to fulfill Nicky's role as Director, Events and Speaker Series. A huge thank you goes out to Nicky for the many years she dedicated to the Branch Board of Directors. Her knowledge and expertise were invaluable.

Patrick Cappello (Advocacy) and Janine Wilson (Treasurer) also both resigned throughout the past year.

We have recruited two new board members Gwen Schentag and Denise Galbraith. We are hoping you will get to meet them at the next meeting – whenever that will be.

If you are interested in volunteering for our Board of Directors, please send us an email at nafwpg@mymts.net.

Current Board Members

Ceci O'Flaherty – President

Lionel Guerard – Vice-President

Donna Dobson – Secretary

Pam Proctor – Treasurer (resigning April 2021)

Gwen Schentag – (Assistant Treasurer – will assume the Treasurer role in 2021)

Barb Higham – Director, Special Events (resigning April 2021)

Tom Higham – Director, Equipment (resigning April 2021)

Naomi Ashton – Director, Membership

Denise Galbraith – Director-at-Large

Connie Kehler – Director, Social Media

Paula Nygaard – Director-at-Large

Annual Meeting of Members (AMM)

The AMM is normally held in the Ottawa area in June every year. This year, as with the other meetings, the in-person portion in June was cancelled but as we are a Not-for-Profit organization, we are required to have a meeting to pass resolutions, elect officials and address financial motions. This year, the AMM is scheduled for December 2 and will be done in a virtual setting with Branch Presidents voting electronically. This year, there are 13 candidates who have put their names forward for a position on the National Board of Directors. One of the vacancies one is in the Prairie and Northwest Territories District

(our District) as Cynthia Foreman has decided not to seek re-election. There are 2 candidates to fill this position, one of which is Connie Kehler from our Branch. Good luck Connie. I know if you are successful you will represent all members well.

More to come on this in the next newsletter.

Indexing

Treasury Board has announced the pension indexing increase that is effective January 1, 2021. The indexing rate for 2021 is one (1) percent.

Golf 2021

Mark your calendars and get your clubs ready!

We are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to host a golf tournament in 2021. We have tentatively booked **Scotswood Links in Elm Creek on Tuesday, 10 August, 2021.**

There will be a few exciting changes this year, so start watching the website for additional information and registration details later in the Spring.

Membership

As of September 30, 2020, we have a total of 5,996 members in the Winnipeg and District Branch. This is a loss of 249 members since January 2020. Our organization is only as strong as our membership so, if you know of anyone eligible to join please encourage them to do so. If you refer a member, there are a couple of incentives that could be a benefit to you.

Branch Initiative

The first is the Branch has a recruitment initiative where we will send you a \$25 gift card for a new referral or \$15 gift card for a change from a single membership to a double membership. Simply send an email to the branch stating that you have referred a new member, give us their name, and tell us what store/retailer you would like the gift certificate from.

National Initiative

Here is an excerpt from information from the National Office. For more information please refer to the full article in the SAGE magazine.

The **Mega Recruitment Drive** (MRD) is now live, and it's **bigger and better** than any recruitment campaign we've ever done. For the second year running, all Federal Retirees members have the chance

to win several great prizes by recruiting new members to the Association.

This year's grand prize is **\$10,000 cash**, courtesy of Johnson Home and Auto. Secondary prizes include a **\$5,000 trip**, courtesy of Collette, one of two **Samsung tablets**, valued at \$350 each, courtesy of SimplyConnect, and one of five **\$100 prepaid AMEX cards**.

From Sept. 1 to Dec. 31, all members who successfully recruit a new member will receive a \$5 coffee card for each recruit and will be entered into the draw for the prizes above. **There are no limits to the number of ballots/coffee cards you can receive**, so the more people you refer, the more chances you'll have to win! Note that this year only those whose referrals result in a membership receive a \$5 coffee card.

There are a few new prize categories this year as well, rewarding members that go above-and-beyond to refer and recruit prospective members. Even new members will have a chance to get in on the action! The new prizes and prize categories this year are:

- **\$500 pre-paid credit card** for the most new members recruited, courtesy of Arbor Memorial
- **\$250 pre-paid credit card** for the most valid referrals, courtesy of Arbor Memorial
- **\$250 pre-paid credit card** draw for new members who join by referral during the contest period, courtesy of Arbor Memorial

Remember, you don't have to be retired to join Federal Retirees. You can recruit anyone who is currently paying into or receiving a pension from Canada's public service, the RCMP or the Canadian Armed Forces. Federally appointed judges, honourably discharged non-pensioned veterans and anyone receiving a survivor benefit from the pensions mentioned above is also eligible for membership.

Website/Social Media

Website: <https://www.federalretirees.ca/en/branches/manitoba/winnipeg-district-branch>

Our website continues to be a great source of information on our local branch events and promotions, and on deals with our local preferred partners. On this site, you will find detailed descriptions of upcoming events and descriptions of past events, membership referral incentives, who your board members are, how to contact us, etc. You'll also find discounts offered by True North Sports + Entertainment on many events, such as Jets games, concerts, and other special events. (Note that due to COVID-19, TSN+E events are limited or not being held at this time.) We've secured discounts from All Seniors Care Living Centres, and Murray Automotive Group. Our Branch website had 64 hits in [September 2020](#). October stats have not been received yet.

Facebook:

Our Facebook page has now reached 102 followers and 94 page likes. We continue to post valuable information relevant to our members regularly on Facebook, posting 76 posts in [September 2020](#) and 60 in [October 2020](#). Our posts reached 348 people in September, and 497 people in October. Our number of engagements (the number of times people have liked, commented, or shared our posts) in September was 570, and 431 in October.

If you haven't followed or liked our Facebook page yet, you're missing out! Search for our page on Facebook at @federalretireeswpg or by our name, National Association of Federal Retirees Winnipeg & District Branch.

Speaker Series

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Spring and Fall speaker series events this year. We are still working behind the scenes to contact speakers and set up events for a time when we can again meet in person. We are also looking at options to potentially meet virtually but have not made any firm decisions. Stay tuned for more information as soon as it's available.

Advocacy

Reach 338

The Winnipeg and District Branch is working with representatives from National Office and our National Board of Directors to support the Reach 338 initiative. This is an initiative to contact all 338 Members of Parliament. Our Branch is focused on contacting five Members of Parliament to ensure a number of things such as:

- Promote awareness of our organization
- Ensure that our key messages are clearly understood
- Advocate on behalf of our members promoting our key pillars including
 - Pharmacare;
 - Retirement Income Security;
 - National Senior Strategy; and
 - Veterans

National Preferred Partner Updates (2 featured)

Johnson Insurance (Medoc)

Lots has been happening with Johnson Insurance our Travel and Home Insurance partner. This year, they saw a record number of claims following the issuance of travel advisories by the Government of Canada. Many of our members were enjoying their time in the south or in Europe and beyond when the pandemic came upon us in a short period of time. Although there were some delays due to volume of claims, over \$15 million dollars in incurred costs were paid out to our members for trip interruption, trip cancellation and health related events. Since September, we have continued to have our regular coverage (excluding Covid related costs) through Johnson Insurance, while enjoying a premium holiday. Our premiums will start again in January 2021 for an 8-month period (January to August) and then we will be back on our regular Fall renewal schedule.

Some changes to our coverage that have been announced recently include:

COVID-19 Medical Coverage effective October 1st, 2020

- Effective October 1, 2020 **medical coverage** under your MEDOC policy will include COVID-19 for the remainder of 2020 and with your new MEDOC policy beginning January 1, 2021.
- Your MEDOC policy now provides medical coverage for travel to areas outside Canada where travel advisories due to COVID-19 may still be in place.

Trip Cancellation/Interruption/Delay benefits

- Trip Cancellation and Interruption coverage remains in place, and is currently available for COVID-19 related cancellations if your trip was booked **prior** to the travel advisories being issued. However, as of January 1, 2021, Trip Cancellation and Interruption coverage related to COVID-19 will not be available for any travel bookings made since the March 2020 travel advisories.

Other important features of MEDOC Travel Insurance

- Coverage for an unlimited number of trips for a duration of up to 40 consecutive days;
- Access to coverage regardless of age or health status;
- Trip disruption – trip cancellation, interruption and delay insurance for multiple trips throughout the policy year;
- Medical emergencies – up to \$10 million in emergency medical coverage per insured person, per year;
- Vehicle return – eligible expenses to transport your car back home if you are unable to because of a medical emergency;
- Baggage protection – loss, theft or damage to your baggage, or reimbursement for necessities you need to buy if your baggage is delayed;
- Coverage while travelling within Canada (great for me with a cottage in Ontario)

For a complete explanation of benefit coverage through Johnson Insurance, please visit their website at federalretirees.johnson.ca or call their toll-free line 1-855-772-6675.

HearingLife Canada

This is one preferred partner that I did use this year. In February, before the pandemic was declared, I took advantage of HearingLife Canada's offer to test our members hearing (following the November 2019 general meeting). Hearing is a very important item in our overall health. Our Association is very fortunate that HearingLife Canada offers the latest in hearing aid technology and offers it to our members at a reduced cost.

We encourage all of you to get a baseline hearing test as part of your annual physical. We all get our eyes tested but for some reason we don't think of hearing as being just as important as our vision...well, IT IS!! Taking care of your hearing will keep you active and engaged in your day-to-day activities with your family, friends and our Association. At our Branch General Meeting on November 19, 2019, we had

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the opportunity to listen to a Presentation given by Sally Thompson & Marc Dupois on Hearing Health. Many of you also took advantage of having your hearing screened by Val Dupois and some of you booked an appointment with Cheryl Anderson at one of HearingLife's local clinics. For those of you who missed out please call 1-888-482-8665 to book your complimentary Hearing Test today. HearingLife and their affiliates have over 300 clinics nationwide, forming the largest network of hear healthcare providers in Canada.

Please feel free to reach out to Cheryl Anderson, Affinity Partner Coordinator with any questions or concerns. Cheryl can be reached either by email cead@hearinglife.ca or by phone at 250-889-4969.

In closing, on behalf of myself, the Board of Directors and the Association, I would like to wish all our members a happy and safe holiday season. Wear a mask, wash your hands, stay safe, stay healthy.

Thanks
Ceci O'Flaherty
President, Winnipeg and District Branch (MB31)